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## SCHOOL AND COLLEGE CONFERENCE AT THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

THE Sixth Conference of University and Preparatory School Teachers was held at the University of Chicago on Friday and Saturday, November 15 and 16, 1895.

At the first meeting on Friday, President W. R. Harper, in a brief introductory address outlined the purpose of the conference, and the results it aimed at producing. The conference then listened to the address by Professor Dewey [see page 1]. This address aroused a keen discussion. In the evening, the address by Prof. Francis W. Kelsey, of the University of Michigan, on "The Future of the High School," presented a masterly survey of the high school situation. This address will soon be published. It is a matter of much regret that it could not be included in this report.

Saturday morning at 9, the conference met to consider general pedagogical questions, the topic being "Essentials and Non-essentials from a Pedagogical Standpoint." The opening address was made by Professor Julia E. Bulkley, of the University of Chicago. An abstract of her address follows :

As higher students of pedagogy and teachers with a broader outlook, we ought in an unprejudiced way to study our schools and our relations to teaching, in order to find where failure exists, and how improvement may be made.

As essential elements of the school, we are accustomed to view the teacher, pupil or class, and a topic for common consideration. The knowledge by the teacher of the subject to be taught is so clearly a preliminary that it would scarcely need comment, except that, popularly considered, it is so often made to represent the only condition of fitness for teaching. No point is made against pedagogical training when the obvious fact is stated : "No one but a man who knows the subject, can evolve a satisfactory method of teaching that subject." The instructor, however, who asserts that a knowledge of the subject

alone is sufficient for teaching that subject, is as one-sided as the normal school graduate who believes that the study of methods suffices for and replaces a knowledge of the subject. The latter class has its representatives in the superintendent who said to a teacher that he employed : "I want no teacher who cannot in forty-eight hours teach any subject assigned to him," and in teachers who make their brief special preparation in a summer school to teach a new subject, or in the normal school director who asserted that he could prepare teachers for teaching in six weeks.

From the pedagogical standpoint which requires organization and systematic work in which details are brought into a plan harmonizing with the nature of the being to be taught, the essentials of teaching are wanting when knowledge of subject or of theory fail. No methods that do not involve a consideration of both elements and of practice brought to a guide, are of pedagogical value. These elements should be brought into the unity of a harmonious whole—of a connected system.

The case is not an imagined one of a person unprepared by professional training, who is introduced for the first time with the responsibilities of a teacher to a class of pupils. He finds that custom, or demand, has regulated the kind and range of the subject or subjects which he is to teach. The quality of his work varies according to his attainments and his own scientific standard. His demands upon his pupils are regulated too often for him by his knowledge of what they are expected to accomplish in order to pass a certain examination. His knowledge of the subject, though generally granted, frequently fails to be comprehensive enough to make the significance of each step to the whole a matter of importance. His knowledge of the nature of the being to be educated is just as essential as his knowledge of his subject; but too often this essential is entirely disregarded. No preparatory study has given him a clew to the comprehension of this human being before whom he stands. "For every failure let the teacher first seek for the cause within himself," is a rule given by Saltzmann, which is never broadly and conscientiously enough applied.

The significance of parts to a whole, if not comprehended by a teacher, will not be evident in his presentation of his subject to the pupil. Incidents in history, facts in science, experiments conducting to facts, words, even, are of no value unless carried back to that which they represent, to principles in which they find their common relation,

to systems of which they form a part. The student gets partial glimpses of truth which confuse and bias, or which make him overconfidently believe that he understands the subject when he has only a partial glimpse of a limited part. The proper foundation for extended intellectual work is wanting, and the student is discouraged from further attempts, or advances haltingly and insecurely into more abstract work. The educational world says by its sanction of teachers unprepared by a special study of the science of teaching, "A knowledge of the subject is the chief, if not the only requirement." But the material of a human life is too valuable to be the subject of such experiments. The homes and places of instruction of our country ought not to be shops of experiment and of crude workmanship. It is the artist who shapes the piece of marble into a statue; the artist who comprehends the value of every touch of variation to the living being should alone assume to give direction to his activities.

The wave of manual training had just rolled across from Europe. The superintendent of a school, a lawyer by profession, had heard an enthusiastic presentation of ways and means in manual training at a general meeting of superintendents. He returned an enthusiastic admirer of manual training; he was convinced that the suitable thing for American schools was to adopt the training which had its origin in the preparation of the artisan class in Europe. It would keep the troublesome small boy busy—and many school devices, and greater plans even, have no higher motive—; it would bring the schools of his city into prominence as belonging to the advance guard in manual training. A woman was employed as general director. Some charts were prepared which served as wall decorations and advertisements, and were supposed to indicate designs for students to copy. The teachers who had charge of the classes in sewing were commissioned to go to the stores, buy stockings, cut holes in them, and have the children mend them, in order to teach them to darn stockings. When an account was taken, the Board of Education discovered that \$40 had been spent for stockings, and considering the expenses too heavy, abolished manual training.

But many an intelligent superintendent faces the question of needed improvements and reform hopelessly as to the means by which they are to be brought about. He knows that his teachers fail to grasp the significance of his aims, that even if these plans are literally carried out, the fineness and delicacy with which plans should meet the nature

of the being to be educated, are lacking ; and the results are often more mechanical than stimulating. Where in this case, does the failure lie ? Where but in the lack of appreciation of essentials by the teacher ? Nothing but the broad view which gives entirety of purpose, which places subordinates in their proper relation of relativity, and sees the significance of each in the subjects taught, gives an appreciation in the use of material which is able to secure the finish requisite for scholarship, to arrange for the right direction to be given to human activity. The skilled chess-player moves each piece in the service of a definite plan. The thought given in such a game is often more wisely directed than that given in the arrangement of details to the whole in the plan of the superintendent of schools.

But not only is the superintendent hampered in carrying out his plans by the narrow range of the teacher's preparation, but the secondary teacher often faces results before which he feels himself helpless and hopeless, because essentials in the course have been neglected, and students have gone on from error to error. Take the one subject of English. If there is any one line of work in the schools in which we might expect results, it is in the use of the mother tongue. What does the secondary teacher find among his pupils ? Errors in speech, faulty construction in writing, blunders in getting material from the printed page, and resulting haziness of thought. The subject which reaches into every other subject, and in which the pupil has had continuous training from the beginning of his school course, has had a touch of instruction here, a touch there, but no strictly consecutive and all-embracing plan that covered essentials so securely that no main point has remained untouched. It may be also that theory has not been reinforced by such consecutive and constant practice that speech has become free and fluent and writing clear and forcible. Most adults are conscious of suffering from this early neglect in the study of English, else the constant practice in this one direction should have brought us ease and fluency under all circumstances. The course of thought ought never to be obstructed, or dulled, or restricted for want of its proper expression if training had meant all that it is possible to mean.

The faulty use of English passes over into the interpretation of Latin and Greek, and nothing but a hazy and indefinite idea is given or gained in translation. Then this result is transferred to the sphere of college and university, and Harvard is no exception to the experience of other higher institutions of learning. Some quotations from

work of freshmen not in Harvard may be given in confirmation of this statement. The translations were written in college as exercises in English, not in foreign tongues. The students were directed to use smooth and idiomatic English, even, if necessary, at the expense of accuracy in rendering, with the following results:

“‘Word was sent to the artists’, ‘requesting them to send drawings and offers for the work, the best of which would be entrusted with the execution of it.’”—*Translated by a freshman from the German.*

“Herewith the loving mother, resembling in her new position and happiness the weed-grown path where the parted Lolva dwells, I must say a few words, how I feel your happiness, how I thank God and you and bless this loving child.”—*Translated from the German.*

Comment of the Examiner: From a freshman theme. Perfectly simple English words, as home and house, carelessly confused. No sense of what an English sentence is.

“Amid a great crowd of people, Charles ascended the gallows; he maintained to the last his belief in the “divine right of kings;” he declared and evidently believed in it—“that the people have no right to a voice in the government”—and that he died,—“the martyr of the nation;” as his grey head fell beneath the executioner’s ax, and he held it up before their gaze, saying,—“this is the head of a traitor;” the English people awakened to the fact that they had murdered their sovereign; and so shocked were they by the sight, that it has never again occurred to stain the pages of English history.”—*From a freshman theme.*

The unfortunate side of this sad record is that the best of pupils are usually sent to college, the others go out to fight their battle for existence with dull and clumsy weapons which ought to have been polished and made fit for use by their long-continued opportunities at the forge. If this experience in secondary schools and higher institutions is not exceptional, is there a remedy? Yes, in a broad view of the essential elements in its different stages by the superintendent and the intelligent application, unwearied in carrying out the practical details, by the teacher. Foreign nations have a much more difficult task. The pupils master a more difficult language, with a multitude of inflections, from which English is free, but this is accomplished by the ceaseless care of trained teachers and systematic supervision.

Where must the remedy be applied? All along the school line, from the earliest elementary work. It is of no use to say that every lesson should *not* be a lesson in language. Every lesson is an oppor-

tunity that should be improved to the fullest extent. Eternal vigilance, beginning with earliest expression, is the price of good English. A good teacher, of course, will not be glaringly obtrusive in correction; but always timely. A pupil has not always a train of thought which is so valuable to him that the form in the expression of the thought ought to be neglected; and correction of the form often clarifies the thought. The fault in English training is not in the secondary schools alone. These forms of expression, both oral and written, are more easily learned in the elementary schools. If neglected in this early period, the channel deepens in the line of errors. Pestalozzi was right in the emphasis which he laid upon elementary work. The organism, or mechanism of nature, leads the individual daily from truth to truth, or from error to error, according to the manner of presentation and use at the opportune moment.

But what can the secondary teacher do to remedy the poor preparation in English of a pupil advanced to the higher grade? Much; for at that age youth is not beyond the capacity for improvement. The vigilance which should have been all along the line from the start and which would have already secured good English in speaking and writing, must here be doubled. Every doubtful statement must be questioned; all uncertain terms must be challenged and understood, all haziness of expression or of thought cleared. Progress on any other basis is only delusive. The secondary teacher with tact can secure the coöperation of the student himself, and self-consciousness and self-correction are at this age legitimate aids in improvement. The struggle will be the more difficult because of the protracted use of false forms and the strength of habit; it may, in exceptional cases, fail in securing finished results in higher grades.

I have thus briefly touched upon some facts in the results of our school training. In all these subjects better results can be gained. The application of the principle regarding essentials may be carried still further. I have avoided reference to concentration and correlation, ideas which the multiplicity of topics, introduced by our experiments, have forced into educational notice. But more important to us than that is the settlement of this question; more vital than any controversy over unsettled terms; more urgent, in view of existing failures, is that the right direction be given from the start to our future students; that higher work does not receive its limitations from the secondary schools, and these in turn from the elementary. The impor-

tance to be given to elementary education from the secondary point of view and to the proper equipment of the elementary teacher cannot be overestimated.

With this view we must consider main essentials for the schools :

1. A broadly trained teaching equipment for elementary as for secondary work ; teachers, intelligent in the knowledge of psychological and pedagogical principles, and skilful in the application of those principles which have become, through practice, a conscience and a guide. With such teachers is secured proper teaching of essentials in each subject, and by them the developing mind will be led daily from truth to truth.

2. A trained superintendency in order that wise direction may be given to the details of united action.

Professor Thurber spoke briefly of the difficulty of deciding upon what was meant by a pedagogical standpoint, and mentioned three essentials upon which there would probably be little difficulty in agreeing ; first, that all teachers should have a sufficient acquaintance with the organization of education to understand the place of the school in which they are employed in the educational organism, and its relations to the schools on either side ; second, a sufficient knowledge of educational psychology, meaning the process of the mind in obtaining knowledge, to keep in thorough sympathy with students ; third, an ideal, a pattern, a clear conception of the effect to be produced by the special work in hand.

After a brief discussion the Departmental Conferences were opened. Reports of these are given below. The afternoon general session was devoted to a general discussion of the Advisory Examiner Scheme, recently adopted by the University. This discussion was not, as President Harper stated, upon the merits of the plan or the advisability of adopting it, for the decision had already been reached to give it a trial. The discussion was for the purpose of explaining the plan. The scheme, as presented to the conference, is here given :



*A Proposed Plan for Coöperation with High Schools and Academies with  
Reference to the Admission of Candidates to the Academic Colleges of  
The University of Chicago.*

1. The University will undertake to visit a limited number of schools with a view to determining whether such schools may have a place in the list of approved schools of The University of Chicago. The formal approval will be granted upon a joint recommendation of the School Advisor and School Counselor when accepted and endorsed by the University Examiner and the President.

2. The University will appoint as Advisory Examiners in particular subjects, Instructors in approved academies or high schools and normal schools who may make application for such appointment.

3. The Advisory Examiner will conduct only the examinations of students who have been under his own instruction. In conducting such examinations, he will, upon the completion by his pupils of any given course, (1) prepare the questions or topics which constitute the examination paper; (2) conduct a written examination on the basis of these questions; (3) select the good papers of those students who desire to have their papers read at The University and present these to the principal of the school for transmission to The University, together with the term records upon the same work for the period covered by the examination.

4. The papers thus transmitted to The University will be submitted to the Departmental Examiners, and, if the questions set for the examination are approved by them, will be read by the University Readers; and the record of the papers, together with the term record of the pupil, will be preserved by The University. If these are satisfactory, certificates for the same will be issued by The University to the pupil. These certificates will be accepted in lieu of the examinations offered by The University itself. When the record thus gained shows the completion of the requirements for admission to The University, the student will, upon graduation from his school, be given a full certificate of admission.

5. The University reserves the right in every particular instance (1) to refuse acceptance of the questions submitted by the Instructor, provided they do not seem to be satisfactory; and (2) to omit from the list of its Advisory Examiners the name of an instructor whose examination papers give conclusive evidence of his inability to teach the subject indicated.

6. The University will make no charge for the reading of the examination papers, but it is understood that the student who passes the examinations and enters The University will pay the examination fee of \$5.00.

Great interest was manifested in the plan among the teachers present. After the discussion the conference again adjourned for the Departmental Conferences. The general meetings were very profitable, and the luncheon served in the Faculty Room was an occasion of much social enjoyment.

The Departmental Conferences were the feature of the occasion. They were tried for the first time, and proved most interesting and advantageous. They were intended for informal discussion of the problems that arise in connection with practical class work in the different departments. No set papers were presented. The discussions were in all the conferences most interesting and helpful to those present; but in some instances the discussions were so informal as scarcely to permit of report.

#### THE LATIN AND GREEK CONFERENCE

The conference was organized with Professor F. J. Miller of the University of Chicago, chairman, and C. K. Chase, secretary. The chairman outlined briefly the programme for the day's discussion: In the morning the subject of translating English into Latin or Greek; in the afternoon translating Latin or Greek into English.

##### MORNING SESSION — PROSE COMPOSITION.

First, what is the object of the study of prose composition?

A vigorous discussion ensued in which the following were urged to be objects:

1. Knowledge of the structure of the language, *i. e.*, syntax.
2. Mental discipline.
3. Vocabulary.
4. Acquaintance with the style of the author.
5. Assistance to the students own (English) style.
6. Ability to read, write and speak the language.

It was strongly maintained by one of the delegates that every language should be taught in the schoolroom in the language itself;

that the pupil must learn to *speak* and *write* Latin and Greek in the same way as he does the modern languages; that this answers every requirement of prose composition.

This method was opposed by several as being unnecessary and a waste of time. It was thought that the student can learn to *read* Latin or Greek perfectly without the ability to speak the language.

As the discussion of the object of prose work continued, it became evident that the great majority of those present were agreed that it is to be used simply as a tool, a means to the more perfect comprehension of the language to be read, while discipline, vocabulary *et al.* are incidentally secured.

The question of *method* was then raised. How is prose composition to be taught? When should it first be introduced? Is it ever to be treated as a separate study, or only in connection with reading courses? Should a text book be used? If so, of what kind? These and other questions drew out an interesting discussion.

A committee appointed to voice the sentiments of the conference on the general subject of prose composition, reported the following resolutions, which were adopted:

*Resolved*, That in the opinion of this conference the study of Latin and Greek prose composition in the high school should be pursued not as an end in itself but as a means to secure a better understanding of the Latin and Greek read, and that to secure this end the following points should be kept in mind:

(a) The exercises should be frequent and easy rather than infrequent and difficult. (b) Should be based generally on the text read, but always expressed in idiomatic English. (c) Should involve only the commoner words in the vocabulary of the prose authors read. (d) Should exercise the student chiefly in the use of common forms and constructions rather than the unusual ones.

#### AFTERNOON SESSION.

Professor Burgess, of the Morgan Park Academy, delivered an address on "The Preparation of a Class for Sight-reading."

Professor Burgess first treated the subject historically, showing the comparative newness of the present methods. The points he brought out were, in brief, as follows:

Syntax has been too greatly deified. Vocabulary is the prime requisite, and to acquire a sufficient vocabulary, the learning of definite word-lists is essential. But these word-lists must be good; they must

be based upon the frequency of usage and involve the principle of comparison in words and roots, without being too minute. Such work should be continued throughout the pupil's course. Next to vocabulary in importance, is the gradualness of the process of sight-reading. The speaker made interesting suggestions as to the proportionate amount of sight-reading in examinations in the various years. The application of sight-reading in the class to the advance lesson for the day following he thought advisable, as also frequent *written* sight-translation. Prof. Burgess seemed to voice the opinions of the conference in his address.

The subject of *Translaion* proved to be an interesting one. A strong argument was made for the carrying of the thought in the order of the original without translating, making the pupil's comprehensive reading aloud of the Latin or Greek the test of his understanding of it. In the experience of the speaker, he thought this could be successfully done, and was in fact the only way of entirely mastering the thought of the original. This view found no endorsement by other speakers.

The question of the kind of translation came in for a full share of the discussion. Arguments pro and con on the use of the so-called "pigeon-English" as a means to the understanding of the original, were given, and as to how far Latinists were responsible for poor English.

A plea for the accepted English dictionary pronunciation of all classical proper names followed.

The chairman, in closing what had proved to be a very interesting and profitable conference, requested each teacher present to send in to him, as chairman, before the next conference, an ideal exercise in composition, giving reasons for the exercises given; also an ideal examination paper on the same subject.

### THE ENGLISH CONFERENCE

THE English Conference met in Cobb Hall, Room 8 D. About seventy persons were present. Associate Professor W. D. McClintock presided, and Dr. E. H. Lewis was chosen secretary. In opening the morning session Professor McClintock referred to the fact that expression is coming slowly to be regarded in its right light as an inherent phase of every subject of instruction, and not as an utterly isolated discipline.

## MORNING SESSION.

10:30—11 A.M. The recent report of the Harvard Committee on Composition and Rhetoric formed the basis of a discussion of the question of good English in translations. At the request of the chair Professor I. B. Burgess opened the discussion, and presented the following resolutions:

*Resolved*, That in the opinion of this Departmental Conference the following suggested improvements are desirable in secondary instruction:

1. More translation in *writing*.
2. Coöperation of English and Classical departments, by which the papers of the latter department may receive criticism from the former, and *vice versa*.
3. Animated and carefully prepared oral translations should be given by the teacher; and the student should study literary translations such as are found in Collar's Seventh Book of the *Æneid*, Strachan-Davidson's *Cierco*, Trollope's *Cæsar*, or Kennedy's *Virgil*.
4. Plenty of time should be taken in class to inspire thought and to direct more precise study of single words and differences of grammatical idiom.
5. In translation a constantly increasing emphasis should be given to the English form. During the last half of the Classical course the English form might will count one half.
6. Prudery should be avoided—such as as telling pupils never to translate a Latin word by its English derivative, or a Latin perfect participle by an English perfect participle.
7. Cast-iron "pet phrases" should be avoided, *e. g.*, "march" for *iter facere*.
8. A pupil's English should not be judged as a whole from single errors, however bad.
9. Awkard, uncommon, unidiomatic English should not be confused with absolutely incorrect English.
10. It should be remembered that it is difficult to write good English even after long practice; that truthful translation is more difficult than a general theme, and that idiomatic English is often conventional and illogical.

An additional resolution was offered by Assistant Professor F. A. Blackburn, of the University of Chicago:

11. In order to give the pupil a proper estimate of the value of clear expression of thought, the teacher should take into account, in his report of the pupil's standing in the language studied, the English of both oral and written translations.

A motion to adopt the eleven resolutions in a body was amended by insertion (in 3) of the words "for comparison, under the direction of the teacher;" so that the third resolution would read:

3. Animated and carefully prepared oral translations should be given by the teacher; and the student should study for comparison, under the direction of the teacher, literary translations such as are found in Collar's *Seventh Book of the Æneid*, Strachan-Davidson's *Cicero*, Trollope's *Cæsar*, or Kennedy's *Virgil*.

The resolutions were discussed by Mr. Lynch, of the Graduate School, University of Chicago: "A teacher ought to give oral translations, literary and interpretative in quality;" by Assistant Professor Blackburn: "Students ought to learn distinctly the difference between purely grammatical errors of translation, and those that are rhetorical;" by Mr. George Edward Marshall, Keokuk, Iowa, High School: "The weight of literary translation should be thrown on the teacher, and the use of much printed translation should be disparaged;" again by Assistant Professor Blackburn: "Let the teacher direct students in the legitimate use of printed translation."

On motion of Miss E. G. Cooley, of La Grange, Illinois, prompted by lack of time for discussion, the resolutions were tabled.

11-11:30 A.M. On motion of Assistant Professor A. H. Tolman, University of Chicago, the following resolutions, which appeared on the printed programme, were adopted almost without discussion:

(1) *Resolved*, That in the opinion of this conference a systematic plan is desirable, consecutive through the school years from the beginning, whereby the essentials of clear, correct, and simple English may be secured in the elementary grades; and whereby, in consequence, a reasonable degree of accuracy, force, and fluency of expression may be attained in the secondary school.

(2) *And Resolved*, That of this plan frequent exercises, both oral and written, conducted with unremitting attention to detail, should form a part.

(3) *And Resolved*, That accuracy in expression, as a help to thought and a test of precision in thought, should form a part of instruction in all subjects.

11:30 A.M.-12 M. "What are the chief rhetorical faults lingering in the written work of students who have finished their secondary school course?"

The discussion was led by Dr. Edwin H. Lewis, The University: Students leaving the secondary schools are not free enough from what

may be called the rhetorical errors of childhood. Of these the chief faults are as follows: (1) Excessive wordiness, in the form either of surplusage or of prolixity. This fault is little considered by most teachers. (2) Paucity in vocabulary even of concrete words; of course variety and accuracy cannot be demanded in the lad's range of abstract words. (3) Extreme looseness of sentence-form; the style babbles on, overworking *and* and *but*. It is pointed only with the comma and the full stop, and even these are often confused. This confusion, which may be called the comma-fault, is the most serious of structural errors. The work of English boys suffers from it more seriously than that of American lads. To go over the theme with the student period by period, clause by clause, is the only way to give him this indispensable training in the logic of style. (4) Bad paragraphing. The student has usually been taught that a topic should be "analyzed" before it is written upon. But he frequently shows on graduation that he has had little practical training in determining the number and topics of his paragraphs, as he ought to determine them for every short theme. This logical discipline is essential. Whatever may be said of the joy of seeing a paragraph grow and blossom under the hand, the young student should do his chief cerebration on the preliminary work of getting something to say, and organizing his thought in its proper masses and parts. Let him set his fire-mist spinning into visible-cored nebulae before he tries to photograph it.

#### AFTERNOON SESSION.

2:30-3:10 P.M. Home reading for the secondary schools, directed and controlled by instructors, as a part of the English work in the course of study.

The discussion was opened by Dr. A. F. Nightingale, Superintendent of the Chicago High Schools. The following is a brief abstract of his remarks:

The term Home Reading is to be preferred to Supplementary or Collateral Reading. The latter has special reference to the reading done by pupils in connection with their regular studies, and such reading is of great importance and should be encouraged. Different pupils should, however, be directed to look up different divisions of a subject or different subjects and bring to the class the result of their investigations. This exchange of information will add much to the general fund of intelligence which a class will secure. The Home

Reading, however, which I wish to emphasize will have no specific reference to the studies daily pursued, but will have for its main purpose the cultivation of a taste for the best books, and the inculcation of the habit of always having a good book to read. Its influence is not for the present simply but for life. To control the reading of pupils outside of school, through their confidence in the interest which teachers have for their welfare, should be one of the highest objects of a teacher's ambition. When we can induce our pupils to read no books except those which we advise, we shall have accomplished much towards starting them out on the highway of contentment and success in life.

The October (1895) SCHOOL REVIEW, in an article on "The Chicago Plan" of Home Reading, gives a list of the books adopted by the Chicago high schools for this complementary work; the list touches nearly every subject of interest. The books are carefully graded to meet the varied tastes and attainments of the pupils. Forty books are secured for each year. They are duplicated to equal the number of pupils, so that no one needs to wait for another. A pupil should be requested, influenced, persuaded, I will not say compelled, to read one book a month. In four years he will have read forty of the best books in the language, all classics except possibly a few books on elementary science. Once in two months, he should write a theme concerning one of the two books read. In the first and second years these themes necessarily will be reproductions or summaries; in the third and fourth years they will be reviews. These will be corrected and commented upon by the teachers, and result in teaching a pupil how to read a book, how to retain its salient points and comprehend the truths it is written to impart. Oral descriptions should also be required, and thus all the class will reap to some extent the profits of a book which one or two only have read. Teachers having the oversight of the reading of one hundred or more pupils, should arrange to have two or three reviews presented each day, and two or three returned each day, so that the pupil will not lose his interest in what he has written, and the teacher not be overwhelmed with a large pile of themes which she must take a month to read. A teacher of English should not have more than twelve hours of recitation a week, so that she may have time to give proper attention to theme reading and to her pupils in their selection of books. This last thought is all important.



The teacher must study the characteristics of each pupil, interest himself in his tastes and talents, and lead him to read such books as will give him a hungering and thirsting for the best literature. This Home Reading should constitute a part of the course in English, and be wholly in charge of the teachers of that department.

The discussion of Home Reading was continued by Dean C. H. Thurber, of the Morgan Park Academy :

“There is one fundamental purpose that lies at the base of all teaching of English. It is this: Whatever teaching of literature or of English that does not produce as a result a love for and an interest in good reading is a failure from a humanistic or culture standpoint. The two aptitudes or tastes which give the greatest joys in life to those who possess them are no doubt the taste for reading and the taste for music. A student is poorly equipped for life who does not acquire in the schools or out of them a taste for good literature which shall be a joy to him all his life. The disciplinary side of English study has received a great deal of attention and is already well developed. This was essential, for form cannot be neglected, but it is now time surely for a thorough discussion and investigation of the means by which the schools can do their duty in instilling a love for reading in the hearts of the young. A practical suggestion along this line which it is within the power of every teacher to follow is this: That means be taken to emphasize the importance of devoting a part of every vacation to reading good books. The idea that vacation is a time for miscellaneous loafing cannot be too soon eradicated. Each teacher before the vacation can easily bring this matter to the attention of his class and suggest certain books which the students are sure to find delightful for reading during the vacation time; then after the vacation is over let the inquiry be made as to how many did the reading and whether or not they enjoyed it. In the school with which I have recently been connected in addition to the regular class work in English, including the English masterpieces, two books per quarter were assigned for what was called ‘supplementary reading.’ In some way or another an examination was given on these books sufficient to test the pupil’s knowledge of their contents. Sometimes it took the form of an essay in the regular English work, based upon these stories; sometimes it took the form of a review. The English work for the quarter was not considered complete until the supplementary reading had been finished. In this way each student during his course read

at least twenty-four books of good, standard literature. Before this plan was adopted it was the custom of the school to print each year a list of books which the students were recommended to read but which almost no one of the students ever read."

As a means of crystallizing the sentiment of the conference, the following resolutions were presented by Dean Thurber :

*Resolved*, That this conference request the aid of the colleges and universities in securing a greater amount of home reading from the scholars in our high schools and academies.

That the colleges and universities require that students taking the entrance examinations in English shall have read at least twenty-four standard works of English literature.

That there be no examination set by the colleges or universities on this reading, but that the certificate of the English teacher that the work has been done be in all cases accepted and that such certificate be required at the time of examination.

That a committee be appointed by this conference to suggest a list of two hundred books from which these twenty-four books may be taken.

A motion to adopt the foregoing resolutions was lost, after a brief but spirited debate.

3:10-3:30 PM. A discussion on the relation of theme-writing to the study of masterpieces was led by Mr. Edwin L. Miller, of the Englewood High School. Mr. Miller said :

"In order to write well one must have something to say and know how to say it to good advantage. The theory that when we have put material for compositions into the hands of students we have done all that is needful is based on the false assumption that language depends altogether on thought, thought not at all on language. The truth is that language and thought are, as it were, the two legs of the body that may stand metaphorically for the human spirit ; neither of these legs can ever get more than a step in advance of the other. Much of our failure in composition work arises from ignorance or neglect of these facts. The best way to teach the subject is inductively, through exercises based on the text of some model of prose style. This principle is based on nature as well as science. All great writers begin by imitating their predecessors. Such exercises as the following are suggested : After the reading of Macaulay's *Frederic*, the writing of a *Life of Napoleon* ; after Webster's *Bunker Hill Monument*, an *Oration on the statue of Lincoln in Lincoln Park* ; after Chaucer's

Prologue, a character sketch from life. Infinite other applications of the principle are of course possible. The exercises mentioned will be found to be a vast aid to intelligent reading as well as to intelligible writing."

It was voted to request the subject of the foregoing discussion—The relation of theme-writing to the study of masterpieces—as a topic for the programme of the next conference.

3:30–4:30 P.M. A discussion of methods of teaching English literature was led by Associate Professor W. D. McClintock and Dr. Myra Reynolds, University of Chicago.

Associate Professor W. D. McClintock suggested that there were three stages in the history of placing English in the school curriculum: (1) The feeling that the education which neglects a systematic and extended study of English is faulty. (2) The securing of a place and time for English in the courses of study. This stage is accompanied by great ignorance as to the best methods of teaching, and by many experiments even contrary to each other in nature. (3) The gradual settlement of the questions of amount of material to be used, methods of teaching, and service of the subject in the mind's education. On the whole, English studies in our schools may be said to be just emerging from the second stage of this development. As to the teaching of English literature, the greatest need is for a systematic and comprehensive training of instructors in the philosophy and constituent elements of literature. Such a discipline scarcely exists today even in the best colleges and training schools. The appeal should be made for courses of study in the secondary school which shall supplement by fundamental literary theory the current practice of studying single masterpieces, single authors, or single periods of work; this fundamental work might be called, "An Introduction to the Study of Literature;" or, "The Elements of Literature." Such a course would introduce the student in a systematic and comprehensive manner to the larger characteristics of literature; the great elements of style, in which literature agrees with the other arts; the smaller elements of style, such as words, phrases, figures and versification, and to the existence and characteristics of the various species of literature: Epic poetry, lyric poetry, drama, fiction and essays.

Dr. Myra Reynolds advocated the inductive method, and gave a number of interesting suggestions concerning methods by which the class may be led to thorough and appreciative preparation of the

lesson assigned. Some of these suggestions are to appear in book form within the ensuing year and hence are not reported in full here.

A programme committee was nominated for the next conference. It consists of Superintendent A. F. Nightingale, Dean C. H. Thurber, Miss Mary E. Jones of the West Division High School, Chicago, Miss E. G. Cooley of La Grange, Ill., and Associate Professor McClintock. Adjourned.

#### MODERN LANGUAGE CONFERENCE.

Professor Bruner, of the Romance Department, presided at the morning session ; Dr. von Klenze, of the Germanic Department, at the afternoon session.

The discussions were animated and very suggestive at both sessions.

Of the questions which elicited the greatest amount of debate, the following were the most important :

First, when should reading at sight be begun? The general feeling seemed to be that the earlier the pupil is taught sight-reading the better. In order to do this properly the teacher should make his pupil as independent of the dictionary as possible by showing the relations between French or German and English. Next, it was asked: Should the foreign languages be spoken exclusively in the class room, or should English be used in explaining rules or difficult passages? It was the general sense of the meeting that the use of the foreign language is very valuable for the purpose of filling the pupil with its spirit, but it was pointed out that there is danger of misinterpretation on the part of the pupils, which can be guarded against only by using English, especially in the beginning, to clear up difficulties. The third question, closely allied with the second, dealt with the problem of translation: How long should the pupil be made to translate into English, and when should he be taught to read in the foreign tongue without translating? There was some difference of opinion on this important point. The majority favored enabling the student to read without translating rather soon; the minority believed that translation should be given up at a late stage to prevent misinterpretation or carelessness, and claimed that the training in English afforded by translating was a factor of considerable importance. Lastly, the meeting discussed the question: When classical works should be read?

Everybody agreed that comparatively easy, and modern authors are preferable until the student has fairly mastered the grammar and can read with considerable ease.

#### CONFERENCE IN PHYSICS AND CHEMISTRY

The departmental conference in physics and chemistry during both its long and well attended sessions had the following topics under consideration :

- (1) The advisability of insisting on preparatory chemistry as a prerequisite to the study of chemistry in the university.
- (2) Definite indication of the character of the laboratory work expected of preparatory students.
- (3) The advisability of requiring one unit of science (physics) as one of the thirteen entrance units.

The points raised may be grouped as follows :

##### *Under the first topic :*

(1) While high school work in physics and chemistry is excellent for mental training, yet the marked superiority of these studies over German, French, History, etc., in preparing students for the university courses in chemistry was denied. (2) It had been the experience that in the university courses in chemistry those who had studied chemistry in the high school did not do much better than those who had no such training. (3) The reason for this was not considered to be faulty instruction or information but the mental incapacity of students of the usual high school age to grasp the subject. (4) It was further urged that in those isolated cases where those who had previously studied chemistry did excel it was due to special instruction during the high school course or to special aptitude of the student. (5) The chief value of high school chemistry and physics was considered as lying in the benefit to be derived from the repetition which will follow to some extent, in the university courses and not in the actual amount of information obtained by the student. (6) This attitude of the university was held to be discouraging towards the study of chemistry in the high school. A desire was expressed to have a definite credit or advantage accorded in the university to those who had already taken a high school course in giving them privileges over those who were taking the study for the first time.

*Under the second topic:*

The preparation of an outline of laboratory work was urged, because (1) students who had chemistry in the high school were obliged to take much of their work over again, or to go into classes much too advanced for them; (2) there is no connection between the present courses in the preparatory schools and in the university; (3) the schools preparing for Harvard are supplied with such an outline; (4) so far the preparatory schools have failed to satisfactorily prepare their students for the university; (5) the number of students taking chemistry in the high schools is diminishing, and this is because of (4)

*These were met as follows:*

(1) It is impossible to make as sharp a distinction between high school and university chemistry as can be done in mathematics, Latin, etc.; (2) the Harvard scheme has been in some respects unsatisfactory to Harvard University itself; (3) the decrease in the number of students taking chemistry in the high schools is due to causes other than those mentioned, and principally that now physics precedes chemistry, which was not the case five years ago; (4) any such scheme would interfere with the liberty of the teacher.

Then, assuming that such a scheme might be advisable, the discussion centered about the methods to be used and the aims and objects of high school teaching in general, and laboratory and science teaching in particular. It was quite generally agreed that the scheme should embrace topics rather than set experiments. The relative amounts of theory and fact were left to the judgment of the teacher. The final action was to decide that two committees of three members each be appointed by the examiners. One of these committees was to outline a laboratory course in chemistry and the other to do the same for physics, both committees to report at the next conference.

DEPARTMENTAL CONFERENCE—PHYSIOGRAPHY AND  
GEOLOGY.

Miss Louella Chapin was appointed secretary of the conference. Mr. Carman, of the Lewis Institute, gave direction to the discussion by putting two questions: (1) Should physiography be taught in secondary schools? (2) If so, what is its place?

Professor Chamberlin: The solution of the high school problem

lies in establishing different courses for different students. Parents and children should choose between alternative courses in which the succession of studies should be fixed. There should be a long and strong course in physiography because : (1) Geography is based on it, being but the superficial expression of geology. It is to be regretted that the study of geography ends in the grammar schools. Teachers often have no higher attainment in this subject than their pupils and the work in geography in the schools is consequently inefficient. (2) Physiography is of peculiar importance in a commercial age. Commercial and domestic interests are affected by geographic conditions in distant lands. (3) Physiography is the best broadening study. It should for this reason have a very decided place constituting perhaps 12 or 15 per cent. of the course of study.

Mr. Cutler, Northwest Division High School, Chicago, discourages differentiation. He asked : (1) Would Professor Chamberlin require physiography in all courses ? (2) Should a student preparing for college study geology ?

Professor Chamberlin answered (1) that he would not require physiography in all courses unless the student were preparing to teach geography, and (2) that a student preparing for college needs physiography and geology to develop his faculties. If classics alone are studied some faculties become atrophied.

Mr. Carman gave his view of a high school course. At first all students should do very much the same work in order that the opportunity for choice between courses should be postponed until it can be made intelligently and advisedly. Mr. Carman wished to know whether Physiography is a study to be put early in the course.

Professor Salisbury : Physiography is the best study for stimulating the power of thinking. It is a subject about which it is easy to arouse interest. We are always in contact with the subject-matter, and past experience has furnished data upon which to reason.

To students in the university, Physiography is often the first course in science, and in these cases the inability to translate the printed page into terms of phenomena is marked.

As to the place of Physiography, it might be put anywhere. It might start before the high school period. Within the limits of Chicago advanced work in Physiography is being done below the high school grade. The management of the course must accord with the age of the class. One-half the work in the university might be done

in the second year of the high school. The question is one of adaptability of teachers. The ideal would be an elementary course below the high school, and another course in the third year of the high school. The development of Physiography to the exclusion of Geology would not be regretted. The two courses could well be consolidated.

Geology as generally studied in most high schools is not an advantage. The subject can be well taught in high schools, however, and is well taught in some. The only standpoint for teaching geology is the standpoint of history. The question should be "How did it come about?"

Mr. Cutler asked (1) Does Nature Study in the Chicago schools cover elementary Physiography? (2) Are Botany and Zoology necessary before Historical Geology can be taught? (3) Is Physics necessary before Physiography? (4) Is Chemistry necessary before Mineralogy?

Professor Salisbury could not answer the first question. As to the others it is advantageous to have each before the other. Students naturally imbibe the fundamentals of Physics. Elaborate Botany and Zoölogy are not necessary although they are a very great help. A student in Historical Geology ought to know their classifications. Biology runs too much to laboratory work at present. As now taught it helps Geology very little.

Professor Chamberlin also replied to Mr. Cutler's questions. Practical considerations must govern in the succession of studies. It has been found practicable to introduce Physiology before Biology or Chemistry.

Professor Salisbury stated that from examination of entrance papers in Geology it seems that the tendency is to acquisition of facts rather than to establishing principles and developing reasoning power.

Mr. Cutler believes the difficulty is that there is the same state of mind in teachers. Papers of teachers seeking positions in high schools showed weakness where the questions involved reasoning.

The conference adjourned at noon. No afternoon session was held.